Utah Program Improvement Planning System (UPIPS) EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF REPORT GARFIELD COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT April 3, 2007

The attached report contains the results of the first two phases (Self-Assessment Process and On-Site Validation Visit) of the Utah Special Education Program Improvement Planning System (UPIPS). This Continuous Improvement Monitoring Process is conducted by the Utah State Office of Education (USOE) Special Education Services (SES), as required by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), Part B. The process is designed to focus resources on improving results for students with disabilities through enhanced partnerships between charter school and district programs, USOE-SES, the Utah Personnel Development Center, parents, and advocates.

The first phase of this process included the completion of the Self-Assessment and the development of a Program Improvement Plan. The second phase, On-Site Validation, conducted in Garfield County School District on March 21-22, 2007, included student record reviews, interviews with school administrators, teachers, students, and parents, and classroom observations. Parent surveys were also mailed to a small sample of parents. Information from these data sources was shared in an exit meeting attended by staff from Garfield County School District.

This report contains a more complete description of the process utilized to collect data and to determine strengths, areas out of compliance with the requirements of IDEA, and recommendations for improvement in each of the core IDEA areas.

Areas of Strength

The validation team found the following:

General Supervision

- Evaluation process is working well; teachers are able to meet timelines.
- Garfield County School District (GCSD) has a unique system for preparing students for the UBSCT. Beginning in the 7th grade, students have a 15 minute daily class focusing on math and language arts. Each area is assessed on a weekly or biweekly basis. Student who did not achieve at least 80% are provided with remediation on the concept before moving on.
- Overall, students with disabilities have increased their CRT scores significantly. GCSD disaggregates data to determine areas of concern and provide remediation in those areas.
- Special education teachers and paraprofessionals are caring, self-motivated, and work as a team by cooperating and communicating.
- Students receive one on one attention in the general education classroom.
- Garfield County School District paraprofessionals are all highly qualified and are required to attend at least 15 hours of training annually.
- Frequent training is provided to special education teachers and paraprofessionals on elements of effective instruction. General education teachers are also invited to attend special education professional development.
- Records of Access forms were included in each special education file.
- Files were organized in a consistent manner across the district.
- All forms used currently meet compliance requirements as determined by the USOE.
- A district Intervention Specialist is available in each school to provide support to general education teachers
 during the selection and implementation of interventions as part of the pre-referral process. Referral forms
 were included in each reviewed file.
- A continuum of service options is available to meet the needs of all students with disabilities.
- After school programs are available at each school site to provide remediation and additional support with assignment completion.
- Parents are notified of Child Find opportunities at the beginning of each school year through collaboration with Early Intervention, newspaper ads, fliers, and during parent teacher conferences.
- Paraprofessionals are properly trained and supervised by school administration and teachers, and included in most district special education training opportunities.
- Elementary schools have begun implementation of a three-tier reading instruction for all students. Three-tier reading instruction professional development is provided to all general education teachers, special education teachers, and paraprofessionals.

- There is a district-wide focus on math and reading instruction for all students. Students receive pre-tests, results of which drive instruction.
- Garfield County School District utilizes trainings and support from the Utah Personnel Development Center (UPDC) and the USOE.
- Current eligibility determinations were included in all files.

Parent Involvement

- Teachers are notifying parents appropriately.
- Teachers are reporting progress to parents in a timely manner.
- Parents stated that their students are benefiting from their special education program.
- Parents feel that they can best participate in their students' IEP process by being involved and informed, being an advocate for their student, supporting the teachers and team, helping to set goals, and working with their student at home.
- Parents were provided with Written Prior Notice of Actions proposed by the school for Evaluation, IEP development and implementation, and Placement.
- Parents received copies of evaluation consent forms, evaluation summaries, Eligibility Determinations, and IEPs, as documented by signatures and reports during parent focus group.
- Teachers communicate with parents frequently; phone calls are logged within special education files.
- Interpreters are provided for meetings in which the parents' primary home language is other than English.
- Progress reports on student IEP goals were included in special education files. Special education staff described methods of collecting data and reporting student progress.
- Parents received copies of Notice of Meeting to discuss IEP development, and School to Post-School Transition Planning.
- Parents are invited to attend some district sponsored trainings.
- Parents received copies of their Procedural Safeguards, as documented by signatures and stated in the parent focus group.
- Parental consent was received and documented for evaluation and placement.

Free Appropriate Public Education in the Least Restrictive Environment

- All students are attending their neighborhood school and participating in every school related activity that they are interested in, the same as their non-disabled peers.
- Students with disabilities have equal access to non-academic and extracurricular activities as their nondisabled peers.
- A majority of IEPs are done within the required year.
- Teachers have been trained to ensure that classroom interventions occur consistently.
- IEP teams collaborate and determine IEP services and location of services based upon the specific needs of
 the student with disabilities.
- General education teachers generally attend and participate in IEP meetings, as documented by IEP signatures, staff interviews, and parent focus group statements.
- IEPs included methods of determining progress and reporting progress to parents.
- General education teachers are provided with copies of relevant portions of IEPs, as well as methods to implement the students' goals and accommodations in their classroom.
- Current IEPs included in all special education files. Initial IEPs were developed within 30 days of eligibility determination.
- Special education teachers are aware of U-PASS data at the student level and utilize the data to drive curriculum and instructional programming.
- At-risk students are identified by subject area and provided with a mentoring teacher from that subject area.
- Students with disabilities are fully included in school activities, as stated during interviews and focus groups, and observed by the UPIPS Monitoring Team.
- All students with disabilities are included in the general education classroom in their neighborhood school, as determined appropriate by the IEP team.
- Bryce Valley High School students indicated receiving the support they needed from the special education staff.
- Extended School Year (ESY) decisions were documented on the IEP; students receiving ESY had an ESY plan that documented the services, frequency, and amount of time.

Transitions

- Preschool programs for students with disabilities are provided throughout the district either in Headstart or District preschools.
- Reverse inclusion is the model in the District preschools. The percent of students with disabilities is less than 20%.
- High school special education teachers coordinate job-sampling and/or on the job training activities for students with disabilities.
- There are effective linkages between Part C and Part B.
- Most GCSD students with disabilities passed the UBSCT and received a regular high school diploma during the 2005-2006 school year.
- Individual Family Service Plans (IFSPs) were included in the special education files, allowing for their consideration during IEP planning.
- Preschool services are provided before the student's 3rd birthday, unless reason is documented.
- There is ongoing collaboration between Garfield County School District Preschool and Early Intervention providers.
- Transition plans were included in files for students by their 16th birthday.
- Transition plans contained evidence of consideration of student preferences and interests during development of post-school outcome statements.
- Bryce Valley High School provides a life skills class for all seniors, which explores careers, budgeting, and
 organization.
- Students at Panguitch High School were able to describe post-school community agencies. A student reported that the school facilitated an appointment with Vocational Rehabilitation.
- Students with disabilities who have graduated received a summary of their performance and notice of change of placement.
- Students are aware of Age of Majority transfer of rights.

Disproportionality

- Garfield County School District reported 0 suspensions/expulsions of more than 10 days reported during 2005-2006 school year.
- IEP Pro Demographic page was included in each special education file and documented student's race/ethnicity and primary home language. If the student's primary home language is other than English, the student's proficiency in English is assessed.

Areas of Systemic Noncompliance*

- ✓ Qualified Staff a special education teacher with a severe endorsement needed.
- ▼ Regular education interventions did not include data documenting failure before referral to special education was made.
- ✓ Evaluation & Eligibility: Evaluation procedures not followed; Students did not meet the categorical eligibility criteria for DD, ED, ID, and SLD.
- ✓ Notice of Meetings not documented for Eligibility Determination.
- ✓ IEP Content: IEP Present Level of Academic Achievement and Functional Performance (PLAAFP) statements did not include baseline or current data or document how the disability affects progress/involvement in the general curriculum; goals were not measurable or address all areas of need.
- ✓ School to Post-School Transition: Transition plans did not document the use of age appropriate transition assessments.
- ✓ IEPs were not implemented by student's 3rd birthday.

^{*}These areas represent items where the visiting team could not locate appropriate documentation of requirements of IDEA 2004 and Utah State Special Education Rules in student records or other data sources.